

CESAR's Board of Directors Report



Annual General Meeting

March 12, 2020

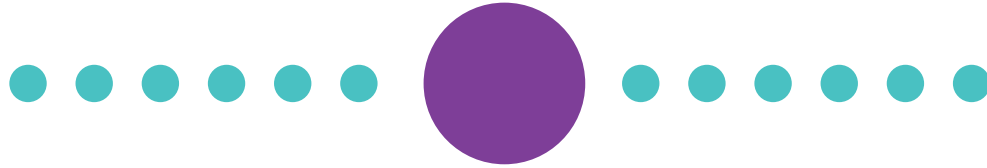


CESAR

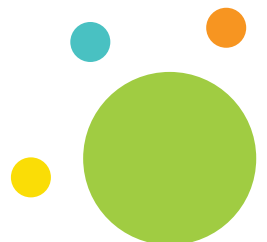
Continuing Education Students'
Association of Ryerson

Local 105 of the Canadian Federation of Students

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Dear CESAR Member,

Thank you for another eventful and successful year! It is through your continued passion and engagement that your students' union continues to grow.

It has been a trying year across education sectors. At the elementary and high school level, threats of dangerous cuts from the Ford Government forced all four teachers' unions into ongoing strike action. In our post-secondary institutions, the Ford Government pushed forward with the Student "Choice" Initiative and cuts to OSAP, and most recently Ryerson University unilaterally chose to terminate their 1986 Operating Agreement with the Ryerson Students' Union.

Despite these struggles, students continue to achieve victories! Last November, the Canadian Federation of Students and York Federation of Students took the Ontario Government to court regarding the Student "Choice" Initiative, and won!! At Ryerson Campus, CESAR revamped the All-Union Coalition, which unites students and workers against injustices on our campus. A huge thank you to our labour partners, who have time and time again supported Ryerson students through championing for academic amnesty during walkouts, sharing letters of support, and speaking up for the right of students to independently organize. Just this week, the Superior Court of Justice ruled in favour of an injunction that stops the University's processes to create a new students' union, and re-assumes RSU's recognition as an official students' union at Ryerson.

Our work is never done and you as members get to direct the board and decide what fight we take on next. There are many ways to get involved in CESAR. Here are some opportunities:

Volunteer with CESAR:

Talk to students, develop your public speaking skills, and become an expert on student engagement!

Email: volunteer@mycesar.ca

Join the We the Students campaign:

Care about keeping education accessible and affordable? If so, join our campaigns!

Email: president@mycesar.ca

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to unite in fair and democratic processes to tell us what you deem to be important on our campus. CESAR will continue working to fight for all students, and we want to thank you for supporting the work of YOUR students' union!

In solidarity,

Nicole Brayannis, President
Ayaan Abdulle, Vice-President Equity and Campaigns
Carol Sutherland, Interim Vice-President Services and Finance
Sloan Miller, Part-Time Director
Janet Rodriguez, Member-at-Large
Clarrington Clarke, Member-at-Large
Sophia George, Certificate Director
Taariq Shaikh, Certificate Director



Equity and Campaigns

Introduction

This has been a very busy and challenging year for CESAR. There have been numerous hurdles and challenges thrown at students whether it's at a university, municipal, provincial or federal level. At the end of the last term, students were rejoiced to hear that the Student "Choice" Initiative was deemed unlawful, but upon starting the second term we faced additional challenges with the Ryerson University and Ryerson Students' Union legal dispute, escalations in labour disputes amongst elementary and secondary workers, and the growing inaction on the climate crisis and respect for Indigenous land defenders. Students are capable of significant wins, but it is not secret that we have fights on numerous fronts.

Do you have an idea for a campaign or want to improve your outreach skills? Join CESAR's Equity & Campaigns Committee!

Email: vp.equity@mycesar.ca

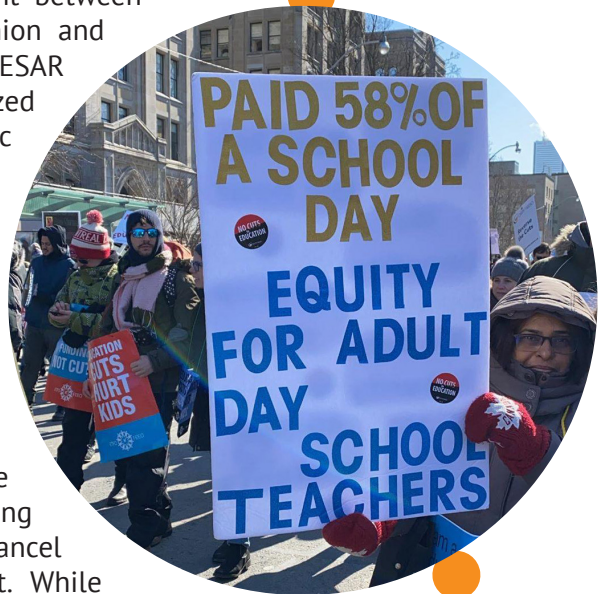
We the Students / Rebuild the RSU


In January 2019, the provincial government announced cuts to financial aid, university funding and the Student "Choice" Initiative in a massive change to post-secondary education. Over the past year, CESAR has mobilized Ryerson students in education drives, petition collection, rallies and public meetings. This past semester, CESAR collected over 1,600 thousand petitions calling for the reversal of the government cuts and proposals. In November 2019, the Student "Choice" Initiative was deemed

unlawful. In Winter 2020, CESAR was ready to continue the work and escalate the actions.

On January 27, 2020 Ryerson University threw a wrench in CESAR's organizing by announcing the termination of the 1986 Operating Agreement between the Ryerson Students' Union and Ryerson University. CESAR representatives organized quickly to put out a public statement, reach out to campus partners and attempt to analyze the impacts on CESAR members, including full-time students who take Chang School courses.

CESAR ultimately determined that the University was overstepping in their decision to cancel the Operating Agreement. While CESAR recognizes that the RSU needs to conduct a forensic audit and answer members questions, it is not the University's role to impose these expectations, nor is it RSU's responsibility to report directly to the University. To address the complexity of the issue, CESAR chose to launch a *Rebuild the RSU* campaign that focused on getting both parties to the negotiating table and restore faith in student democracy. This included both a legal intervention as well as a strong





ground campaign working with allies on campus, labour unions and talking directly to students.

The RSU has since won an injunction and the Operating Agreement has been restored. However, CESAR continues to put in the work to restore faith in student democracy on campus. This can only be done through more conversations, demonstrably accountability and through a students' movement that is activist-oriented to its core.

No Cuts to Education

The Ford Government is attacking our education system. Currently, every teacher's union in Ontario (OSSTF, ETFO, OECTA, AEFO) is striking against Ford's proposed cuts to the classroom that would reduce the quality of education. Some of these damages include increased class sizes, defunded special needs programs, and the addition of mandatory high school e-learning courses. In addition to this, the government is also looking to make damaging changes to Full Day Kindergarten by removing teachers from the classroom, and continues to ignore the unsafe working conditions that exist due to not enough Educational Assistant support and already too large class sizes. Throughout the semester, CESAR has joined teachers at the picket line at Jarvis Collegiate to show solidarity with workers. On Friday, February 21, CESAR marched to Queen's Park and joined the Ontario-wide teacher strike. The fight is not over! If you would like to get


involved in organizing a Ryerson contingent to support teachers and tell the Ford Government that we are defending education for the future generation and demanding #NoCutsToEducation, please contact Nicole Brayannis at president@mycesar.ca.

Transit

The municipal government has decided to increase the student discount fare by approximately \$5.70 per month, while the provincial government is attempting to scrap the co-fare system between GO and TTC users. CESAR participated in a press conference with councillor Josh Matlow to oppose fare increases. CESAR continues to work with allies in TTC Riders to organize against cuts and to advocate for barrier-free, accessible, and free transit systems.

\$15 and Fairness

The *\$15 and Fairness* campaign is an active campaign that has called on the provincial government to follow through on the previous government's commitment to increasing minimum wage to \$15 in January 2020. However, the provincial government has not only rolled back on minimum wage, but also in paid sick days and other job protections. The 15 & Fairness campaign is focused on not just increasing minimum wage to \$15 but to also create fair and just workplaces that have sick and personal days, safe workplaces and long-term workplaces rather than temp agencies.



CESAR continues to participate in the campaign and assisted in hosting the annual Provincial Mobilization Network in the Student Centre on February 28 and 29.

Canadian Federation of Students

The Canadian Federation of Students is our national and provincial students' union. The Federation provides bulk purchasing services, conducts research and proposes solutions, lobbies different levels of government and resources students' unions and social justice movements to mobilize both on and off-campus. CESAR is local 105 of the Canadian Federation of Students.

Student "Choice" Initiative Legal Challenge

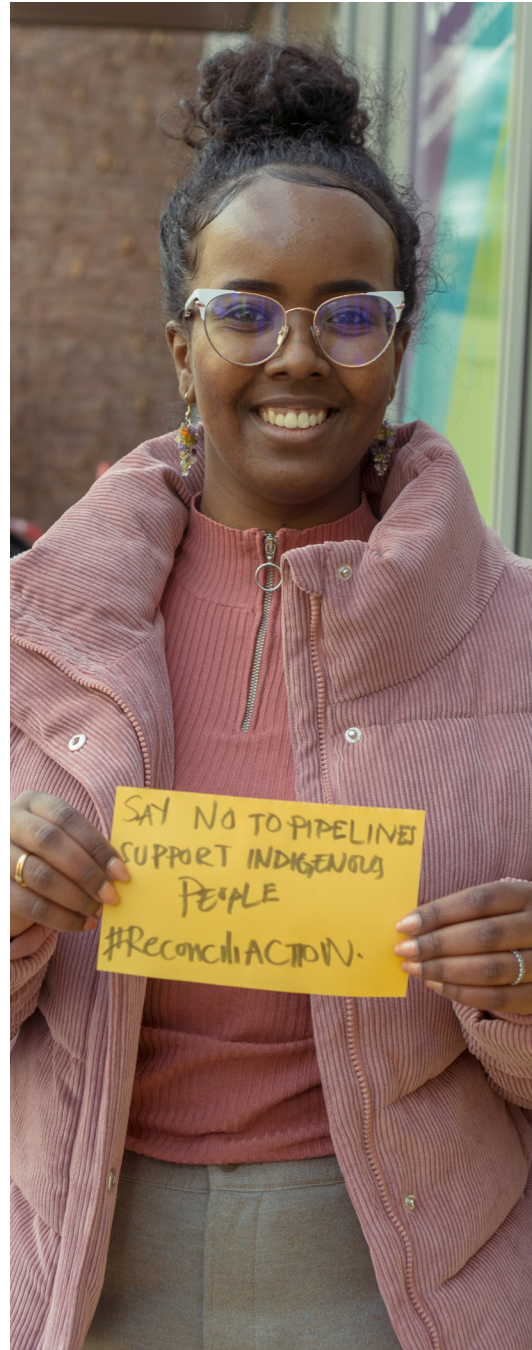
The Federation won a court challenge against the provincial government regarding the Student "Choice" Initiative. This is an important step in enshrining the rights to organize for students across the province. Thanks to the work of the Federation, student organizations including the students' unions, student societies, EyeOpener, CIRU Radio and other ancillary fee recipients were able to see restored funding in the Winter 2020 term.

Provincial Lobby Week

CESAR representatives participated in the Provincial Lobby Week from February 24 - 27, 2020. Provincial Lobby Week is an opportunity to meet with decision-makers in Queen's Park to discuss current issues in post-secondary education and how they relate to Members of Provincial Parliament and Cabinet Minister's portfolios. This year, representatives presented "Funding Ontario's Future: Student Recommendations for the 2020 Ontario Budget," which discussed cuts to OSAP, action on reconciliation, fairness for international students, performance-based funding and other issues in access to post-secondary education.

Circle of First Nations, Inuit & Métis Students

CESAR sent three Indigenous students to the Annual Circle Gathering in Nova Scotia from March 6 - 9. The Indigenous students were able to meet other students from across the country to talk about campus issues, strategies, resources and support systems.



Services



Introduction

CESAR continues to offer many of the services that students rely on to save money and make access to education more possible. Throughout the year, CESAR provides hundreds of bursaries, and offers cost-savings through office printing, legal aid and other services. Right now, CESAR is preparing for our annual free tax clinic to help students file taxes. Despite the Student “Choice” Initiative, CESAR was still able to provide our cost-saving services and expand our service delivery modules, including installing a Square App for digital sales. CESAR has also worked to decorate the front desk office to celebrate regular holidays and observances, notably Pride and Lunar New Years.

Do you have an idea for a new service or program? Email vp.services@mycesar.ca

Health & Dental

All part-time degree students are automatically enrolled in the CESAR Health and Dental plan. Plan coverage includes 80% coverage for prescription drugs, eye exam, 65% dental coverage, custom orthotics, acupuncture, diabetes supplies

and more. This coverage begins in September or January, depending on your date of enrollment, and spans through the Spring and Summer terms until August 31.

Temporary inactive period ended:


The blackout or temporary inactive period for first-time plan users has ended early this term, on February 28. This means that new students can submit claims online, and access the additional discounts using their Green Shield Canada ID card or number when visiting the dentist, optometrist or other health care practitioner. CESAR continues to offer a free mailing service for students who wish to submit paper claims but encourages all students to use the online direct deposit feature to claim their covered expenses for a faster reimbursement.

Winter 2020 Opt-out period:

CESAR’s winter opt-out period ran from January 1 to February 7, and there were 124 new part-time degree students starting their year this term. One third of these students chose to opt out. Students who opted out have been informed that their refund cheques are available for pickup at the CESAR office. CESAR will be following up periodically with students to ensure they get their refund this term and will mail cheques to distance education learners who cannot pick up their cheque on campus.

Approximately two-thirds of all part-





time degree students currently access the CESAR Health and Dental plan service.

2020-2021 Rate Renewal

CESAR was able to secure no change to rates for our upcoming health plan year. The plan is currently operating at a very stable, sustainable level, and the usage is balanced out fairly across plan members at CESAR. For the upcoming benefit year, new to the plan is coverage for death by suicide, which was formerly not included on the plan. Also new to the plan is the Akira benefit which is an app that links students to healthcare, prescriptions, consultations, 24/7. These services and negotiated rates were secured and partly paid for by the National Student Health Network and the Canadian Federation of Students, as part of CESAR's membership.

We are currently investigating the addition of mental health care onto the CESAR health plan which would allow members to access psychologists, psychotherapists and social worker care. If this is implemented, it will be available to plan members starting in September 1, 2020.

Member Services Office

The Member Services Office is a shared space between CESAR and the RSU located in the central lobby of the Student Centre at 55 Gould Street. The RSU's

ability to offer this space as a service centre severely shrunk, which was one of the impacts of the Ontario government's Student "Choice" Initiative. On top of that, the TTC metropass system changed to Presto totally, which was the main product sold out of this office. The office currently houses the full-time student health plan administrator and it's staff. The discounted movie tickets and merchandise are being exclusively sold at Copyrite, the print centre in the basement of the Student Centre. There were a few ideas pitched in order to transform the Member Services office space, however, CESAR fought to maintain its use for student services, and also to keep a portion of the space for CESAR specific operations.

Tax Clinic

CESAR is currently collaborating with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) to bring a free tax clinic service to CESAR members, which will take place the last two weeks of March at the CESAR office. The clinic is open to all students on campus. CESAR has fifteen CRA and E-file approved volunteers for this year's clinic. We are currently preparing for the upcoming Tax Clinic volunteer training which will take place at the CESAR offices on March 17, from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Members who need their taxes filed for the upcoming season may book their



appointment online starting March 1 at mycesar.ca/tax-clinic

The CESAR clinic is limited by income restrictions placed by the CRA, if you are a student making more than \$30 K a year, you can use the Canadian Federation of Students' Ufile code to file online for free. This information can be found on our website at mycesar.ca/tax-clinic. If you are looking to catch up on previous years returns, you can also book an appointment at one of the CRA's other free clinics found online at the government of Canada website.

Legal Service

CESAR offers free legal services to its members free of charge. Bill Reid, CESAR's in-house lawyer, will discuss, and help, with any personal legal issue, ranging from family law matters, landlord and tenant issues, employment or debt problems, criminal charges, accident claims, immigration applications, dealings with the government or corporations, and commercial or intellectual property issues.

Bursary

Every term, CESAR members who are in need of financial assistance can apply for a bursary. It is a needs-based, non-refundable \$500 grant that is paid directly to bursary recipients.

This academic year, starting in the fall of 2019, CESAR has given out 200 bursaries, which includes 100 bursaries for this current winter 2020 semester, for a total of \$100,000. All bursary applications are reviewed anonymously by the Bursary Committee, and are awarded based on financial need and equity criteria.

Emergency Grant

The goal behind the Emergency Grant is to assist students who are experiencing unexpected and emergency financial situations. The grant is not intended to pay course tuition fees, ancillary fees, or course textbooks. Over the course of this year, there has been an increase in requests related to the cuts to OSAP, renovations, mental health crises and other effects related to cuts to provincial public services. CESAR is currently undergoing a review to the Emergency Grant system to better allocate funding and review applications.

A total of 20 Emergency Grants have been distributed in the 2019-20 fiscal year thus far.

Sponsorship

Due to the Student "Choice" Initiative, CESAR decided to place a moratorium on funding external sponsorships until the legal decision was made. CESAR will



look to reopen funding options in the new fiscal year. CESAR has assisted in providing bookings, printing and advertising for a number of internal and external sponsorships throughout the year, including:

- Afghan Youth Engagement and Development Initiative (AYEDI)
- Akua Benjamin Legacy Project Event Committee
- Black Futures Now Toronto
- Ethno Racialized Disability Coalition Ontario (ERCDO)



- Jack Layton Chair
- Jack Layton Leadership School
- National Council of Canadian Muslims
- Ryerson Students for Food Security
- Toronto Disability Pride March
- Toronto Association for Democracy in China
- Unifor Chair in Social Justice & Democracy at Ryerson
- Worker's Action Centre
- Young Women's Leadership Network



Student Rights & Academic Advocacy



Student Rights & Appeals

CESAR employs a full-time Student Rights Coordinator to assist CESAR members with all matters related to academic misconduct, grade and standing appeals, as well as any administrative issues with the university.

CESAR's Student Rights Coordinator, Lyndall Musselman, is available by appointment or during drop-in hours which are:

Tuesdays, 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Wednesdays, 4:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Thursdays, 3 p.m. – 5 p.m.

University Policy Review

There are many important Ryerson Senate policies that are currently under review. Here is a list of the policies that impact CESAR members (excluding the graduate student policies under review):

- Policy 134, The Undergraduate Academic Consideration and Appeals Policy
- Policy 61, The Non-Academic Code of Conduct
- Policy 159, Academic Accommodation of Students with Disability
- Policy 46, Undergraduate Grading, Promotion, and Academic Standing (The "GPA" Policy)

The Senate established the Ad Hoc Academic Policy Review Committee (APRC) in 2015 to review Policy 145 (Undergraduate Course Management) and Policy 134 (see above), as well as Policy 135, which is now known as the Final Examination Policy. Amendments to Policy 135 were approved in 2017-18, and the Course Management Policy, now known as Policy 166 was approved in 2018-19, so only Policy 134 remains under review by the APRC. CESAR has two representatives on this Senate committee: the President and the Student Rights Coordinator. Meetings of the APRC happen monthly and there are multiple sub-committees of this committee that are also meeting on a monthly basis which the Student Rights Coordinator attends. The plan for revising Policy 134, the Undergraduate Academic Consideration and Appeals Policy, is to split it up into two separate policies: one that focuses on Academic Consideration – which is requesting an extension on an assignment or deferral of a test or exam based on experiencing an extenuating circumstance, and then a separate Appeals Policy – which will outline the principles and processes for appealing a final grade in a course or an academic standing. Both of these new policies will cover all students, undergraduate students and graduate students.

The review committee for Policy 61, the Non-Academic Code of Conduct,

includes the Student Rights Coordinator and recently the President of CESAR. The last meeting of this committee happened in November 2019 and the timeline for revising this policy has now fallen behind. There have been no communications about when the next meeting will be. The Office of the Vice Provost Students is responsible for reviewing this policy.

Review committees for Policy 159 and Policy 46 do not include any representatives from CESAR or the RSU. This is concerning because both students' unions have advocates who interact with these important policies to guide and support students in resolving their issues with the University, and therefore the students' unions representatives offer valuable institutional knowledge and feedback on revising these policies. CESAR will ask for a seat at the table in reviewing all University policy that impacts our members.

CESAR is devoted to making sure student input is included and at the forefront of all decision-making at Ryerson. Thus, we continue to collect feedback from students regarding these policies, which we then compile and relay to the relevant committee. Please contact CESAR's Student Rights Coordinator at studentrights@mycesar.ca if you have any additional questions, or are interested in sharing your perspective.

CESAR's Student Rights Coordinator is available to assist students with appeals and complaints. The CESAR Student

Rights Coordinator prioritizes supporting CESAR members.

Academic Standing and Appeals workshops

Leading up to the deadline to appeal fall 2019 grades and academic standings, (which was January 20, 2020), the following workshops were offered to assist students:

"Academic Probation, RTW, PPW: What are my options?"

"How to Write a Strong Appeal"

In January, these workshops were well attended with about 20 students attending each workshop, which were offered twice. These workshops are offered at the beginning of every semester to help students determine if they should appeal their grades or standing from the previous semester. For example, in May there will be another offering of these workshops ahead of the deadline to appeal winter 2020 grades and academic standings on May 22, 2020. Students can also go to mycesar.ca to obtain a comprehensive info package on the grade and standing appeal process and find out the dates for upcoming workshops.

Statistical Data on Student Appointments for Academic Advocacy

In order to track information about the students who seek advice from the Student Rights Coordinator, CESAR (along with the RSU) ask students to fill out an

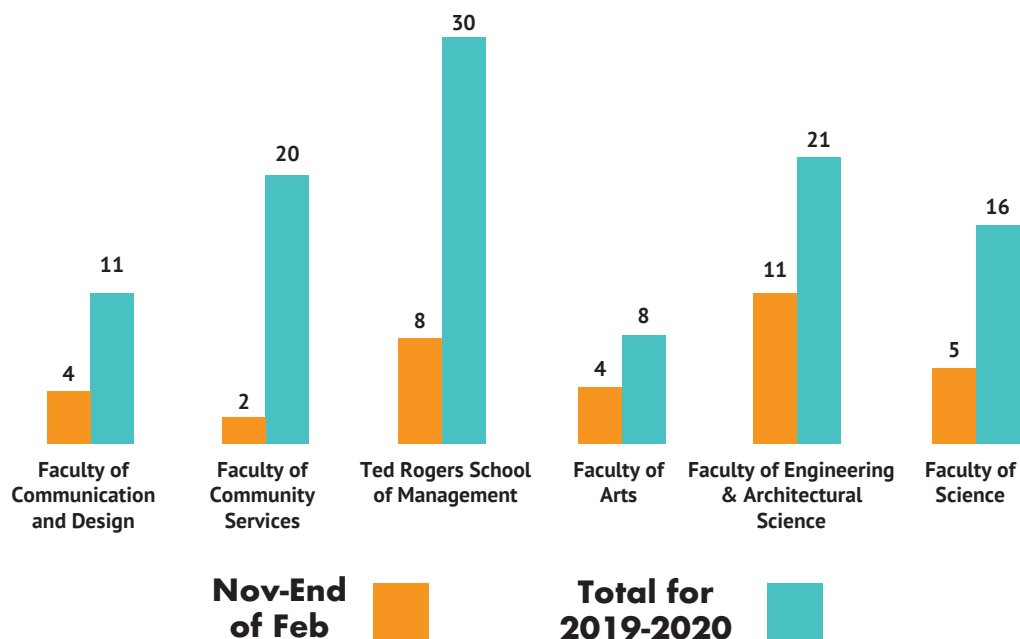




Intake Form for a meeting regarding student advocacy. From the beginning of May 2019, more than 110 students have come in for assistance or booked an appointment with the Student Rights Coordinator. The statistical information below reflects what was indicated by students. Keep in mind that some students chose to identify themselves in certain ways, filling in some fields and not others, and that completing the form is optional and not at all mandatory.



Students' Program Information

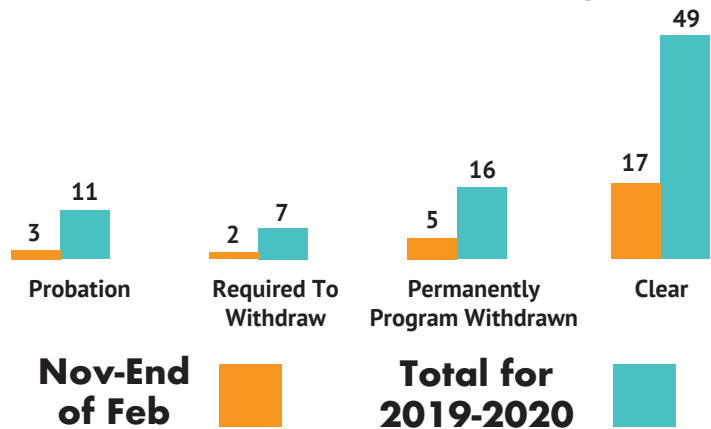


Student Advocacy Intake Form Identity Demographics

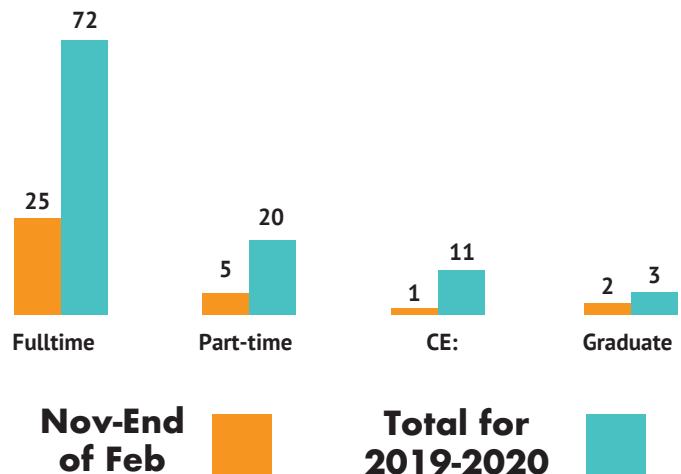
Our intake forms also track identity demographics, however it should be stated that many students opted not to complete this part of the form because it is not mandatory. For the 2019-20 year 44 of those who did complete the form identified as a woman, 41 identified as a man, and none identified their gender as being pan or spectrum; 64 students identified as being racialised; 45 students identified English as being their first language and 30 stated that another language was their first language.



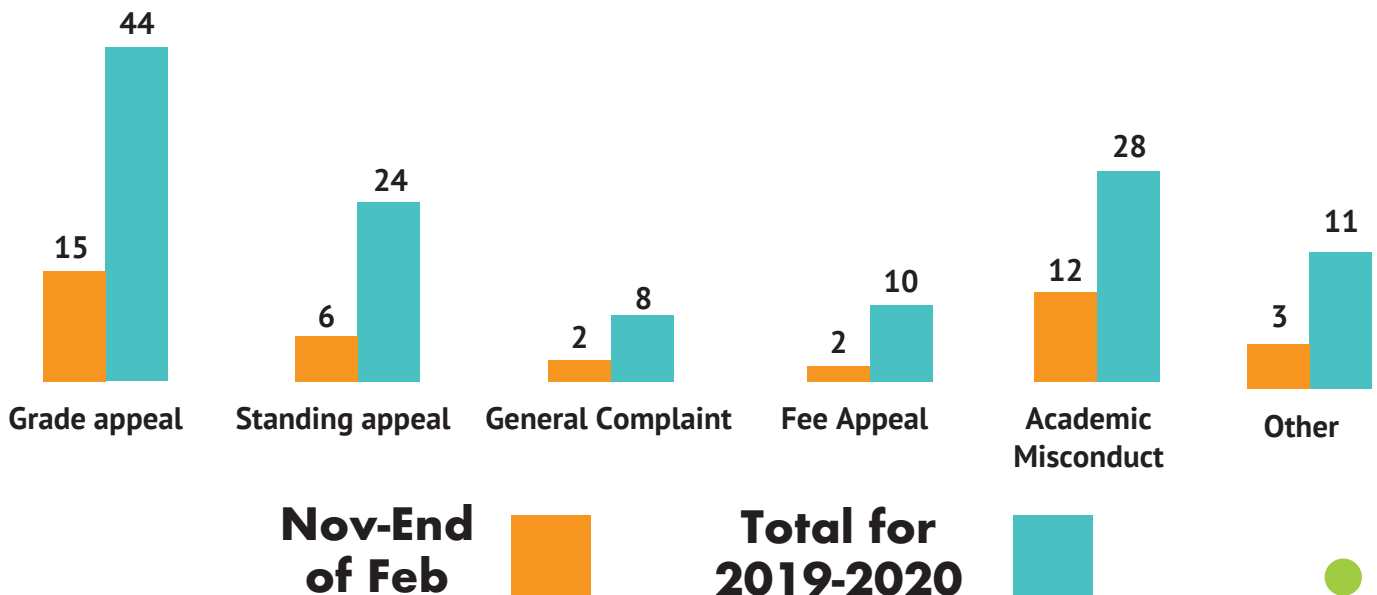
Academic Standing



Status of Enrollment



Reason for Visit



Events

Letter from the President

CESAR has had so much fun hosting over twenty events this year - with a few more events still to look forward to! In the last year, we've added amazing events like financial literacy workshops, family movie nights, career networking opportunities, and a new variety of mental wellness destressors. We have also been able to continue our most anticipated events like Fall and Winter Week of Welcomes, the International Students' Dinner, and the End-of-Year Gala. CESAR has also been a proud collaborator with a number of on and off-campus groups. From the assisted revamp of the RU Student's Good Food Market, to running an organizing workshop during Social Justice Week, to hosting the International Women's Day vendor's fair, CESAR has loved working with others to change the narratives of continuing education students and ensure that our inclusion and participation is felt throughout campus. A huge thank you to all of our fabulous volunteers for making all of this possible, we truly could not do it without you!!

Do you have an idea for an awesome event or want to improve your event planning skills? Join CESAR's Events Committee!

Email: president@mycesar.ca

CESAR Frost Fest

January 21 - 23, 2020

CESAR Frost Fest included a number of events hosted by CESAR with the


goal to engage and network part-time degree, continuing education and mature students! All events were free and open to CESAR members and their friends and family to attend. On January 21 and 22, CESAR welcomed back students to campus with the Street Fair which included free BeaverTails, hot chocolate, apple cider, a pasta dinner, and skating! Skating lessons were available thanks to the Ryerson Women's Hockey Team, and there was never a dull moment thanks to music entertainment by CJRU Radio. CESAR also invited students to partake in a clothing drive with all donations going to Sistering. On January 23, students came together in a Winter Warm-Up Coffee House which featured a delicious hot chocolate bar, fun board games, and an amazing performance by singer Earlybird.

Love, Health, Sex Week

February 11 - 14, 2020

CESAR hosted its annual Love, Health, Sex Week which features programming and advocacy to address consent, sexual and mental health, and healthy relationships. This year, CESAR collaborated with the Office of Sexual Violence Support





& Education (OSVSE) and featured a variety of events that promoted sexual health, education and safety on campus. Events included: Zine and Poster Making Night, Sexxy Paint Night, and Dirty Trivia featuring host Samantha Bitty. In addition, CESAR also took part in the Safe Sex Fair, and invited students to make their own safe sex kits. To close out the week, CESAR participated in the Strawberry Ceremony which takes place annually at the Toronto Police Headquarters and called for action and justice for the hundreds of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2-Spirit people.

Finance Workshops

Life After Graduation Series

January 29 and February 25

The Life After Graduation finance aid workshops were an attempt to discuss financial planning with students ahead of tax season. The first workshop focused on Registered Retirement Savings Plans (RRSPs) and how to prepare for loan repayment. The second workshop focused on Tax-Free Savings Accounts (TFSA) how to set up a financial plan even while faced with student debt and rising costs to education. Both workshops were well attended and gave an opportunity for students to develop financial skills and network with financial experts.

Mental Health & Wellness Events

Exam Destress Kits

December 3 - 13

CESAR hosted our annual exam destressors from December 3-13. The exam kits included a number of food giveaways as well as pens, highlighters and stress balls. This year, CESAR invested in a mental wellness cart so that we can find students studying rather than rely on tabling locations. This allowed us to better reach out to students who were hidden in study pockets of campus. CESAR coordinated a sponsorship with David's Tea to provide stress-relief teas.

As well, CESAR coordinated a social media

campaign to encourage mental wellness reminders and action plans. Look out for the Winter exam destress outreach that will start in early April.

Stretch Out the Stress

November 13

CESAR hosted a yoga workshop with Master Yoga in the Ryerson Athletics Centre. This was a great event for CESAR to venture into mental wellness and athletics programming for mature students.

Dance for Mental Health

November 29, 2019

CESAR hosted a dance and wellness event at the beginning of the exam season. The event helped encourage students to take breaks to dance, listen to music, relax and breath.

Essential Oils Workshop

January 16

CESAR hosted an Essential Oils Workshop to encourage students to participate in a drop-in workshop to build perfumes.



Upcoming Events

- International Student Dinner: Monday, March 16
- Black In Post Sec Documentary Screening: Tuesday, March 17
- Good Food Market: Wednesday, April 1
- CESAR End-of-Year Gala: Wednesday, April 1
- Exam Destress Kits: April 6-21
- Networking in the Accounting Industry: Thursday, April 16
- Networking in Publishing Industry Industry: Friday, April 17



Free Tax Filing for Members

To file for free, members must:

1. Sign in to a new or existing UFile account for the current tax year
2. Enter tuition fees and months at school (must file T2202a)
3. Locate the "Special Offer" form in UFile's left-hand navigation
4. Enter the special offer code: CFS1981

(note: entering the code CFS1981 at check-out will not discount the tax file, the student must enter the code in the Special Offer section.)





Food Security



Good Food Market

The Good Food Market held seven market days as of March 4 and plan to host two more before the end of the semester. We increased the frequency of markets as of January 2020 from once per month to twice per month, and intend to host the market weekly in the future. The Good Food Market reached up to 600 students per market and served 300-400. The market sells affordable produce sourced from Food Share and uses a sliding scale/ pay what you can model as of January 2020 to accommodate students who struggle financially.

The Good Food Market was covered by the Eye Opener, the Ryersonian and Ryerson Today for its impact of improving food security and food sovereignty for students.

Ryerson Food Council

The Ryerson Food Council was founded in October 2018 by Debbie Field, Nicole Austin, Maria Jude and other students representing groups such as the RSU, the Good Food Centre and Meal Exchange. The council was formed to create a community of leaders from staff, students, faculty and administration to tackle food issues on campus as a collective since people are always stronger together. After its foundation, the council met monthly to determine collective goals for a food sovereign campus and grew with partnerships, participants, a mandate, an executive team in September 2019, and eventually demands for change to the Ryerson University administration.

During that same time, the Ryerson Students for Food Security launched a Good

Food Market on campus in March 2019 that now runs monthly to meet student needs for food on campus when a food bank does not meet their needs for dignity and choice. The Ryerson Students for Food Security was also working on launching a Good Food Challenge on campus to measure the quality and sustainability of food through a food audit provided by Meal Exchange. The Good Food Challenge initiative is spearheaded by Kaitlin Rizarri and Maria Jude since Summer 2019 had little success in engaging the current Food Service provider to sign on to participate.

On November 20, 2019, a historic meeting occurred between Food Council members and visiting members. For the first time in the history of the council, it included Business Services' Voula Cocolakis, and Food Service manager Marwan El Chafei. In the past Council meetings, we had discussed eventually inviting university administration and food services and this was the perfect opportunity to discuss face to face what students have been





asking for: better food on campus.

Maria Jude presented the results of an informal student survey and El Chafei seemed to disapprove of the survey due to its low sample size. The same survey was re-distributed and reached 275 responses. Following this meeting, the professor and coordinator of the Centre for Studies in Food Security, Reginald Noble, arranged for Food Council representatives to present in front of the members of the Ryerson Senate on December 3. The next meeting is taking place on March 31, and will include a food systems centred anti-oppression training led by the University Equity Service Centre.

Survey results

Based on the results of the survey, it is clear that healthy & affordable food on campus is of prime importance to students, which points to a deficit in the food system at Ryerson in terms of food affordability. This is supported by a multitude of research that labels the food system at Ryerson as a food swamp, high in low-quality unaffordable food, mostly inaccessible to



students (Silverthorn, 2016).

A free or discounted meal program is ranked as number two which is not surprising because food should be readily available and other schools have experimented with free/pay what you can meal program models and have been successful at supporting students' food needs. For example, the People's Potato at Concordia ("Concordia Food Coalition", 2019), Harvest Noon kitchen at the University of Toronto and the Loaded Ladle at Dalhousie University ("Loaded Ladle", 2019) are all programs run for this purpose. When purchasing food and picking up affordable groceries is still not enough to meet food needs, a food program can fill that emergency food access gap.

Based on experience and observation, the food services are not running for a long enough time on campus, which shows a gap in food accessibility on campus. The Hub Café is only open from 10 am to 3 pm daily. There is also a gap in where food is available on campus because the only places available to buy food now are the Hub Café and the residence buildings. Tim Horton's cafes that were removed previously nicely spaced and had long hours. Now students struggle to find food to buy on campus early in the morning and late in the evening.

Surprisingly, the sustainability of food is of high importance to students as it is ranked as third. Students at Ryerson have historically supported environmental causes like:

- pressuring the university to divest from fossil fuels
- banning the sale of bottled water
- pedestrianizing Gould Street

For this reason, it is refreshing to see that there is a wide understanding that the food system and the environment are highly interconnected. The sustainability piece can be supported through the Good Food Challenge by pressuring food services to have 25% "good food" based on the Meal Exchange calculation, and as result invest in more sustainable farming practices and food options (i.e. plant-based).

Culturally appropriate food ranked as fifth on the list and this points to how unreceptive the food services at Ryerson are to feedback. Students have complained many times that the food at the hub Café and the residence building is very limited to Western or Western-influenced cultural food. Individuals have complained primarily about the lack of kosher, halal, and vegetarian food. Other schools, like the University of Toronto, have feedback boxes that they





review daily to ensure accountability to students.

More working microwaves have been listed as 6th in importance and from observation alone, it has been clear that microwaves on campus are limited as they are only in some buildings, too few in quantity, and the ones available are often not working or not clean enough to use. An emergency food bursary is one way to help students access food when food is the most flexible thing in their budget to cut when money is tight, so for this reason, it comes as no surprise that it ranks high on the list. Since a bursary is hard to access due to barriers such as time, application, and long wait times to receive a bursary, it is clear

Rank	Priority item	Amount that voted 4/5 or higher	% that voted 4/5 or higher
1	Healthy Affordable food on campus	256	93%
2	Free or discounted meal program	218	80%
3	Food sold on campus for longer hours	209	76%
4	Sustainable food on campus	206	75%
5	Culturally appropriate food on campus	185	68%
6	More working microwaves	177	65%
7	Emergency food bursary	163	59%
8	Food available in all buildings	161	82%
9	Free breakfast program	154	79%
10	Annual food audit	142	52%
11	Community kitchens for student use	135	49%
12	Weekly good food market	129	47%
13	Shared fridges	63	23%

Note: #8 and 9 were added after November 20, 2019 to incorporate the comments of students which is why it has 78 fewer respondents (response to “anything we missed?”)

that other ways to support students access food can be more helpful timewise. The annual food audit ties into the sustainability of food and can help students reach the goal of a food sovereign campus by having autonomy of choice over the means of how and where the food is produced within the Ryerson food system. Community kitchens, weekly Good Food Market and shared fridges rank low on the list, likely because preparing food would require students to have time to do so and fridges can lead to stolen food unless proper measures are put in place to avoid this. Time poverty is a big part of student hunger so prioritizing food programs that enable quicker access to good food would be ideal. The survey results are consistent with the hypothesis that food on campus is not meeting the needs of students in a variety of different ways.





Organizational

Student 'Choice' Initiative

In November 2019, the Student "Choice" Initiative (SCI) was deemed unlawful by the Divisional Court of Ontario after the policy directive was challenged by the Canadian Federation of Students and York Federation of Students. The SCI was a policy directive laid out by the provincial government in January 2019 without prior consultation of students' unions. It would, in essence, make students' unions voluntary and defund student services across campus.

Since November, CESAR has lobbied the University to reverse the SCI implementation at Ryerson and release CESAR and other ancillary funds to groups. With the reversal of SCI, CESAR has attempted to return to regular operations with the understanding that the government may appeal the Divisional Court decision.

The SCI is an important reminder that engagement with membership is vital to the operations of CESAR. As a students' union, CESAR will continue to engage members in all aspects of our organization and build a stronger students' movement to challenge ill-planned legislation by regressive governments.

Human Resources

CESAR currently employs four unionized full-time staff, one Executive Director, one full-time contract staff and a number of part-

time staff and placement students. This Winter semester, CESAR implemented CESAR Ambassadors who conducted regular outreach in evenings to engage members. The program was extremely successful and will be proposed for future terms.

Finances

CESAR had to previously reduce the operational budget due to the Student "Choice" Initiative (SCI). With the unlawfulness of the SCI, CESAR is now projecting receiving full fees for the Winter term and has cautiously planned to increase operational spending for the future term. Disregarding the SCI, CESAR is in a healthy budget position.


Communications

CESAR uses a number of methods to communicate with members, since membership stretches across thirty-eight countries. Students who are interested in advancing CESAR's communication strategy are encouraged to get involved in the Digital Engagement Committee that is aiming to better engage Distance Education students. Get involved by emailing communications@mycesar.ca.

Class Representative Program

The Class Representative Program continues to run every semester. Class Representatives are recruited in a variety of ways through google forms and paper forms. At the beginning of the semester, CESAR





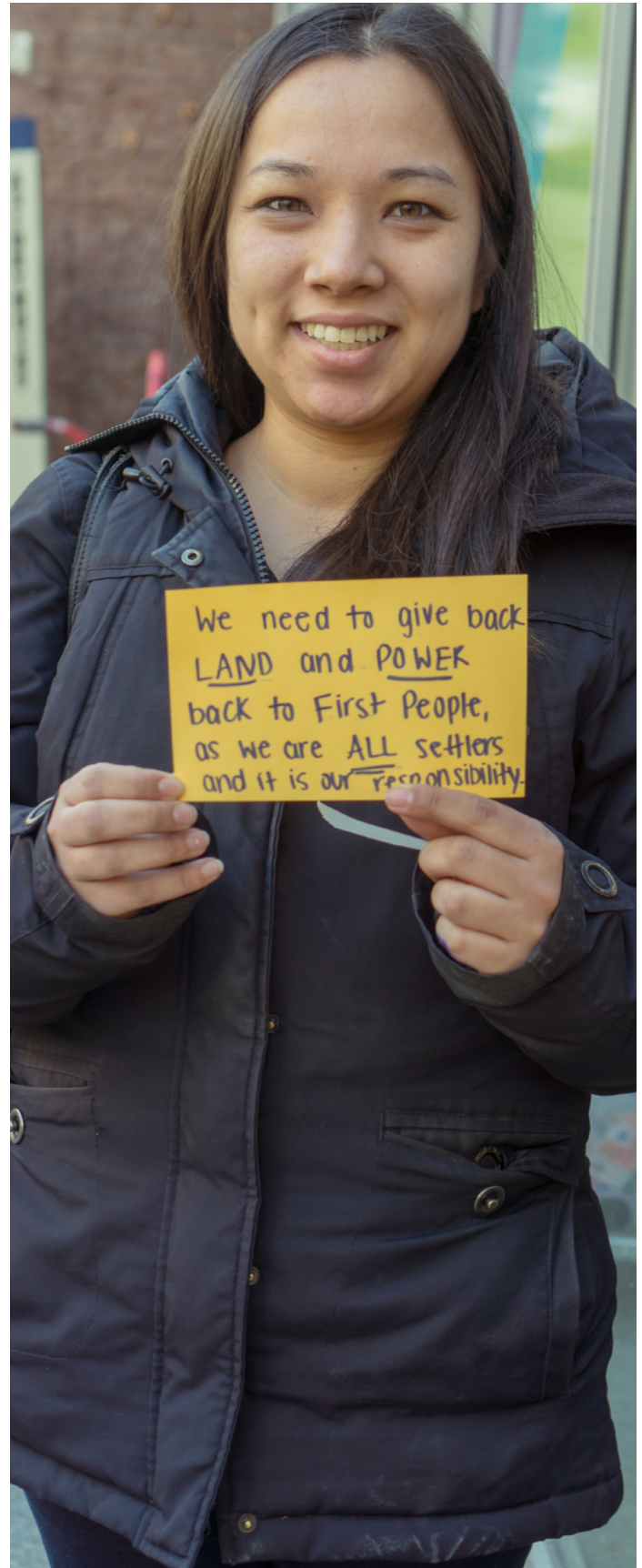
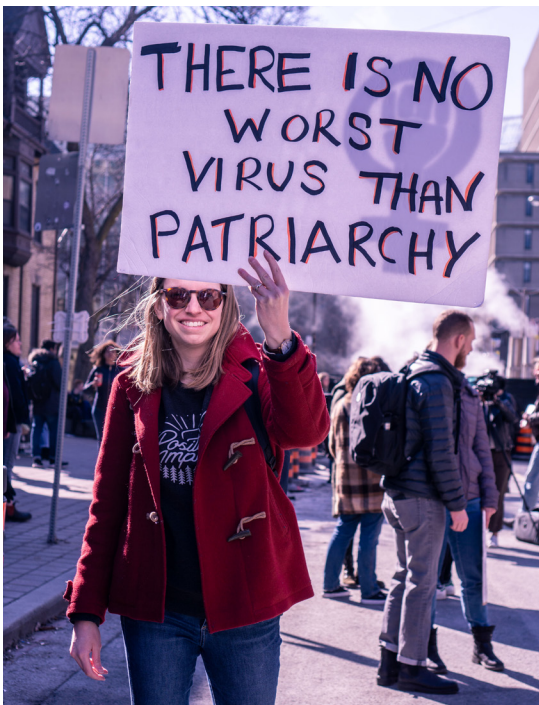
recruits Class Representatives through the CESAR listserv, class talks and general outreach. Class Representative Meetings are the last Thursday of every month. They are an opportunity to get updates on monthly projects, new materials and discussion circles for new ideas.

Volunteer Program

The Volunteer Program has been a massive success in the Winter 2020 term with over 130 hours logged in January and February. The program is run through Track-it-Forward which allows students to sign up for events, log hours and receive awards. Volunteers will be recognized at our appreciation event on April 1, 2020.

Staff Appreciation

On behalf of the CESAR Executives and Board of Directors, we would like to thank the hard work and dedication of all our full-time, part-time and placement student staff. Without the work of these individuals CESAR would not be able to run the services, host the events, advocate for campaigns or answer questions from members. Thank you!



The Continuing Education Students' Association of Ryerson (CESAR) office is located on the third floor of the Ryerson Student Centre:

SSC301, 55 Gould St.
Toronto, ON, M5B 1E9
416-979-5193

Office Hours:

Monday–Thursday: 11:00am – 6:30pm

Fridays: 10:00am – 6:00pm

www.mycesar.ca



@RyeCESAR



CESAR

Continuing Education Students'
Association of Ryerson

Local 105 of the Canadian Federation of Students